

REMARKS

In view of the following discussion, the Applicant submits that none of the claims now pending in the application is anticipated or made obvious under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103. Thus, the Applicant believes that all of these claims are now in allowable form.

I. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1, 3-5, 7 AND 9-11 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3-5, 7 and 9-11 in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Thompson-Rhorlich (US Patent 5,504,852, issued April 2, 1996, herein referred to as Thompson). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has misinterpreted Thompson. Thompson discloses a method for creating a collection of aliases representing computer system files. (Emphasis added.) In Thompson, a user is able to search for files with specific criteria. The files that meet the search criteria are then stored in a folder and identified with an alias while the original file remains in the original location. (See Thompson, column 2, lines 27-53.) The folders containing or storing the collection of aliases resulting from a search are identified by a "special" icon. (See Thompson, column 3, lines 34-38.)

The Examiner's attention is directed to the fact that Thompson fails to teach or to suggest the novel concept of an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in at least one option area, as positively claimed by the Applicant. Specifically, Applicant's independent claim 1 and 7 positively recites:

1. A graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:
 - at least one option area for displaying to a user functions which may be invoked by the user by operating an input device to the GUI; and
 - an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate

menu the functions that are displayable to the user in the at least one option area. (Emphasis added.)

7. A method of providing to a user of a graphical user interface (GUI) option functions for software that is associated with the GUI, comprising the steps of:
providing at least one option area for displaying to a user functions which may be invoked by the user by operating an input device to the GUI; and
providing an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in the at least one option area. (Emphasis added.)

Applicant's invention provides a method and system for a user activated instrumentality, e.g., an icon that displays functions in a separate menu that may be hidden from a user in a GUI. A significant aspect of the invention is that a user may activate an instrumentality, e.g., represented by an icon in the GUI, that displays all the functions that a user may wish to invoke. Thus, the Applicant's invention advantageously allows a user to maximize the full potential of a software program by allowing a user to activate an instrumentality to reveal all the functions that are displayable in a separate menu, that may otherwise been hidden in an option area.

Thompson fails to teach or suggest the use of an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in at least one option area. In contrast, Thompson only teaches that the icon is merely a symbol that identifies that a folder contains a collection of aliases matching the criteria of a performed search. (See Thompson, column 3, lines 31-52.) Applicant specifically claims the invention where activating the instrumentality reveals functions that are displayable in a separate menu. Applicant provides examples of functions as "printing", "updating", "saving", "querying", "sending", "resyncing" and so on. A collection of aliases is not a listing of functions which may be invoked by the user, as positively claimed by the Applicant.

Moreover, Thompson discloses that when a user opens a "viewer" folder marked with a "special icon", that it simply displays the results of aliases or files that match the criteria of a performed search. (See Thompson, column 1, lines 55-58.) The Examiner's attention is directed to the fact that the aliases or files stored in the "viewer"

folders and then displayed on the desktop, in Thompson, are not functions that help a user maximize the full potential of a software program. In contrast, when a user activates an instrumentality in the Applicant's invention, a menu of all the displayable functions are displayed in a separate menu such as, but not limited to, print, save, query, or update and so on.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 7 are clearly patentable and not anticipated by Thompson. Furthermore, dependent claims 3-5 and 9-11 depend from claims 1 and 7, respectively, and recite additional limitations. As such, and for the exact same reason set forth above, the Applicant submits that claims 3-5 and 9-11 are also patentable and not anticipated by Thompson.

II. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 2, 6, 8 and 12 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

A. Claims 2 and 8

The Examiner has rejected claims 2 and 8 in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Thompson in view of King et al. (US 6,307,549, issued October 23, 2001, herein referred to as King). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

The teachings of Thompson have been discussed above. King teaches a reduced keyboard system. The system includes a memory having a number of vocabulary modules. The vocabulary modules contain a library of objects that are each associated with a keystroke sequence. The objects that match the keystroke sequence are then displayed to the user in order of frequency of use in a selection list. (See King, Abstract.)

However, King fails to bridge the substantial gap left by Thompson. Specifically, King also fails to disclose the novel concept of an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in at least one option area. Applicant's independent claims positively recite:

1. A graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:

at least one option area for displaying to a user functions which may be invoked by the user by operating an input device to the GUI; and
an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in the at least one option area. (Emphasis added.)

7. A method of providing to a user of a graphical user interface (GUI) option functions for software that is associated with the GUI, comprising the steps of:
providing at least one option area for displaying to a user functions which may be invoked by the user by operating an input device to the GUI; and
providing an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in the at least one option area. (Emphasis added.)

As stated above in Section I, Thompson simply does not teach or suggest the novel concept of an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in the at least one option area. The sections cited by the Examiner in Columns 1 and 3 of Thompson only discuss organizing a group of aliases that match search criteria into a "viewer" folder. The "viewer" folders containing the organized aliases are identified by a non-operable "special icon." There is clearly no teaching in Thompson that an operable instrumentality is activated by a user to display in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in the at least one option area. This deficiency is not bridged by the teaching of King because King only teaches entering a sequence of keystrokes to display associated words or to access a menu. (See King, Abstract; Column 18, lines 19-23.)

In arguendo, even if Thompson and King were combined, the combination would still not teach or suggest Applicant's invention. The combination of Thompson and King would only teach a method of organizing files that match search criteria with an associated alias and storing all the aliases in a "viewer" folder identified by a non-operable "special" icon; all of which could be performed with a sequence of keystrokes from a reduced keyboard disambiguating system. Therefore, the combination of Thompson and King does not teach or suggest Applicant's invention as recited in

independent claims 1 and 7, where King fails to bridge the substantial gap left by Thompson.

Dependent claims 2 and 8 depend from claims 1 and 7, respectively, and recite additional limitations. As such, and for the exact same reason set forth above, the Applicant submits that claims 2 and 8 are also not made obvious by the teachings of Thompson and King.

B. Claims 6 and 12

The Examiner has rejected claims 6 and 12 in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Thompson in view of Wong et al. (US 6,175,364, issued January 16, 2001, herein referred to as Wong). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

The teachings of Thompson have been discussed above. Wong teaches a framework and method for interfacing a GUI. The GUI includes a plurality of sliding panels located on the edges of the main window. Each sliding panel is identified by a unique color. (See Wong, Column 4, Lines 54-67; Column 5, lines 1-7.)

However, Wong fails to bridge the substantial gap left by Thompson. Specifically, Wong also fails to disclose the novel concept of an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in the at least one option area. Applicant's independent claims positively recite:

1. A graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:
at least one option area for displaying to a user functions which may be invoked by the user by operating an input device to the GUI; and
an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in the at least one option area. (Emphasis added.)

7. A method of providing to a user of a graphical user interface (GUI) option functions for software that is associated with the GUI, comprising the steps of:
providing at least one option area for displaying to a user functions which may be invoked by the user by operating an input device to the GUI; and

providing an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in the at least one option area. (Emphasis added.)

As stated above in Section I, Thompson simply does not teach or suggest the novel concept of an instrumentality operable to be activated by the user when the user manipulates the input device for displaying at the user's command in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in the at least one option area. The sections cited by the Examiner in Columns 1 and 3 of Thompson only discuss organizing a group of aliases that match search criteria into a "viewer" folder. The "viewer" folders containing the organized aliases are identified by a non-operable "special icon." There is clearly no teaching in Thompson that an operable instrumentality is activated by a user to display in a separate menu the functions that are displayable to the user in the at least one option area. This deficiency is not bridged by the teaching of Wong because Wong only teaches a method of identifying sliding panels with a unique color. (See Wong, Column 4, Lines 54-67; Column 5, lines 1-7.)

In arguendo, even if Thompson and Wong were combined, the combination would still not teach or suggest Applicant's invention. The combination of Thompson and Wong would only teach a method of organizing files by associated results that match search criteria with an alias and storing all the aliases in a "viewer" folder identified by a non-operable "special" icon; multiple "viewer" folders, from multiple searches being identified by a unique color. Therefore, the combination of Thompson and Wong does not teach or suggest Applicant's invention as recited in independent claims 1 and 7, where Wong fails to bridge the substantial gap left by Thompson.

Dependent claims 6 and 12 depend from claims 1 and 7, respectively, and recite additional limitations. As such, and for the exact same reason set forth above, the Applicant submits that claims 6 and 12 are also not made obvious by the teachings of Thompson and Wong.

III. AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 6 was amended to correct the claim dependency from 6 to 5. The Applicant submits that the amendment was made for reasons unrelated to patentability and that no new matter is introduced.

IV. AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

Applicant amended various paragraphs in the specification to address typographical errors. No new matter is introduced.

V. AMENDMENT TO THE DRAWINGS

Applicant has attached replacement sheets for Figures 1-6. Applicant respectfully submits all drawings now conform to 37 CFR §1.84. No new matter is introduced.

Conclusion

Thus, the Applicant submits that all of these claims now fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103. Consequently, the Applicant believes that all these claims are presently in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issue are earnestly solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues requiring the issuance of a final action in any of the claims now pending in the application, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Mr. Kin-Wah Tong, Esq. at (732) 530-9404 so that appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

9/30/04



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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement sheets contain updated formal drawings Figs. 1-6. All of the Examiner's objections have been addressed. Applicant respectfully submits that the attached drawings now comply with the requirements of 37 CFR §1.84.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet